GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:100
ANSWERED ON:18.11.2002
DECLINE IN FOREST WEALTH
C.K. JAFFER SHARIEF

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether any survey has been conducted regarding the percentage of social forestry which is used in rural India as a means of fuel;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether there has been a sharp decline over the years in India`s forest wealth;

(d) if so, the details thereof;

(e) whether it has caused serious environmental problems; and

(f) if so, the steps taken/ proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU)

(a) & (b) According to National Forestry Action Programme, 17 million tonnes of fuel-wood is available from forests of India every year on sustainable basis and almost an equal quantity of fuel wood comes from non-forest areas.

(c) & (d) The assessment of forest cover in the country has been done biennially since 1987 and so far seven assessments have been made. During this period, the forest/tree cover has decreased marginally from 19.46 % to 19.39% of the total geographical area of the country. According to State of Forest Report, 1999 there is a net increase in the forest cover by 3896 sq. km than the preceding assessment, i.e 1997. Figures of forest cover prior to 1987 are not available.

(e) No, Sir.

(f) Does not arise.